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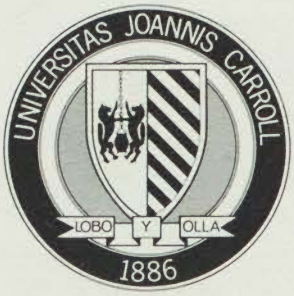
UNIVERSITAS JOANNIS CARROLL
LOBO Y OLLA
1886

Carroll Quarterly, a literary magazine produced by an undergraduate staff and written by the students, alumni, and faculty of John Carroll University, University Heights, Cleveland, Ohio.

Volume 23 Autumn, 1969 Number 1

Contents

Here & There:
the View from No. 11, D.S.

Welcome to Volume 23, Number 1. This issue of the *Quarterly* contains a new masthead, and is under the direction of a staff which has changed considerably over the summer. Along with a new Editor comes a new Assistant Editor, Michael A. Pellegrini, who returned over the summer from a semester at Loyola University (Rome). Former Contributing Editor Ronald Corthell assumes the vacated post of Managing Editor while another of last year's Contributing Editors, Gregory Schoen, becomes Art Editor. The financial concerns of the *Quarterly* are being handled by Patrick J. Condon. Another veteran staff member, Dennis M. Fogarty, becomes an Associate Editor along with Roderick B. Porter. Richard Leehr is now the Circulation Manager. Acting as Contributing Editors this year are Michael Demma, Richard Morycz, and Michael V. Howe.

Beginning a new year, it is appropriate that we again redefine our goals, and, perhaps, set about on pursuing new directions. We have always felt that the arts are the best way for the individual to distinguish himself in the university community. We have also made the *Quarterly* available to those in the university community who wish to speak out on the problems of our time. We have always pursued a standard of excellence in the arts, and have encouraged those with talent to develop their skills for the benefit of us all.

The *Quarterly* is then, an open forum, but is designed primarily for the publication of student efforts. During this year we hope to see this circle of *Quarterly* contributors expand. The past years have been excellent years for the *Quarterly*, and to maintain that excellence, it is necessary for new contributors to replace those who in the past have given so much; and this issue, in agreement with that spirit, finds the works of several new contributors appearing between the covers. We hope to see more in the issues to come.

We will try, in so far as it is possible, to return manuscripts submitted for publication. The rules governing submission are much the same as in the past. All manuscripts must be legible, preferably typed. The upper one-third of the first page must be left vacant for the use of the staff. All manuscripts must be accompanied by an address to which they may be returned, and anyone who wishes to use a pseudonym must accompany it with his own name. This information will be kept in the confidence of the Editor. Any art work — including sketches, water colors, pen or pencil drawings, and photography, color or black and white, will be considered for publication within the necessary limits of the *Quarterly* budget. Any submissions to the *Quarterly* should be entrusted to the worthy care of Miss Lynn Carrier, the secretary of the English Department, or sent to the Editor of the *Quarterly*.

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The *Quarterly* Best Published Author Awards will be announced in the fourth issue, next Spring. These two awards are presented at the annual Awards Banquet to the best non-staff student writers of the year, and all who may fit into that category are encouraged to keep the awards in mind.

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The *Quarterly* is pleased to announce that "The Gondolier," a short story written by Michael Pellegrini,

the new Assistant Editor, was published in the July-August issue of the *New England Review.*

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Our sister publication, the *News,* deserves to be complimented for its fine showing in the annual competition sponsored by the national honorary collegiate journalism fraternity, Pi Delta Epsilon. The *News* has always had a fine record in state competition, but this year it has received the national attention it so well deserves.

Our other sister publication, the *Carillon,* came out recently with a gray cover, and while its contents are hardly gray, it is not nearly as dappled as was last year's volume. We leave it to each viewer to determine which volume better pictures Carroll.

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He was a comedian, a street person, a poet with a mind a little like Bosch, a little infatuated with the secret meaning of things. He was fresh like the beats were fresh when they carved out their own little niche in the literature of the fifties, when they shouted for the first time, and gave rise to a style of writing that has continued down to our own day. He was a remarkably charming man, ingenuous but not naive, and poetry that once seemed a bit morose became, when read by him, amusing and lively.

He was an artist who, in "Segovia in the Snow" spoke of the subversion in the strings of the Spanish master. An artist who, in the bitter irony and wit of "Tyrranus Nix," articulated some of the rage of those thinkers in America who want to guide the country along new roads, with a new face.

For those who had previously read Ferlinghetti, his reading gave new depth to his work; and, perhaps, an attitude to approach it with. To those who were unfamiliar with his work, it was an excellent introduction to a man who is a good poet and novelist, and who seemed, on that stage that night, to be a very great man.

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Medium Cool Not So Hot

While we all walked out, we shared in a common disgust, bitterness, and anger. I asked myself, "What could the world think, and the Europeans in particular, of the United States after seeing this movie?" As a child, I always thought of America as a vast dreamland, generous and paternal, where all men above creed and race shared in equal opportunity. What has happened to the American ideal? Is the film *Medium Cool* faulty and dishonest in exposing a false picture of American modern society or is its portrayal a valid one? This is an important question.

Recently, the public has been exposed to a series of films which have supported certain polemical, ideological attacks on the social political structure of the United States. One must admire the frankness and directness of these movies, but, in evaluating them, one tends to lose their moral dimension, though their artistic level is heightened. *Medium Cool* illustrates this phenomenon. There is little doubt that the movie is well done. The performance of the actors is good and the attempt to keep "cool" is the representation of hot topics is also successful. The director views Chicago's problems, including the ghettos, the slum areas, the 1968 Democratic Convention, and the climactic *riots* in a *cool* but highly provocative manner. The audience is

forced to side with the views of the director. The facts are colored in such a way as to present only one side of the situation. Thus, it is easy to feel contempt and to condemn that which *Medium Cool* so coolly attacks, a fascist, brutal, and despotic America. When this initial effect wears off, however, and reality's nuances appear again, the viewer realizes that he has been duped. It is true that America is not the beautiful country which intrigued my adolescent imagination. Yet, it is not the cold, impersonal wasteland portrayed by the detached lens of the *Medium Cool* cameraman.

The attempt to reform by creating a nihilistic, immoral, and frightening world is not artistically valid nor existentially true. Art must be a portrayal of human nature. By definition, art must deal within the boundaries of morality. *Medium Cool* fails to present a valid picture of what America is today. Americans should resent the creation of such a picture and be ashamed to use it as a basis for judgment.

— Giacomo Striuli

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Thoughts on the Men on the Moon

Every man sees through his own eyes, hears through his own ears, relates through his own memory. As I watched two Americans doing their job on the moon, I saw my countrymen in a typical sequence of American actions. There was a brief comment: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." There was the planting of the flag, the adjusting of the television camera, the conversation with the President. Then these men settled down to work.

One might have thought that there would be moments of wild excitement, incoherent speech, prayer. Accelerated heartbeats were the only signs of emotion. These men had two hours in which to take samples, adjust instruments, insure their return. Both ends of the spectrum of human emotions — the solemn and the ludicrous — were sharply clipped.

In some way, each of us felt that he was with them. I recalled setting foot on Antarctica and the agony of adjusting a seismograph in the cold. When the moon-seismometer failed to level, I was with them in the grim jest of the seismologist, "Something goes wrong every day." When the bubble finally showed a level reading, I enjoyed the witticism, "Take a picture of it now." When the instrument recorded their footsteps, I was happy. Now that the device seems not to be recording, I am dejected — ten years of design went into that particular black box. Like every other beholder of what these men did, I saw through my eyes, heard with my own ears, and brought my own memories to relate this epochal event to me.

— Henry F. Birkenhauer, S.J.

Intersection

On a good friday
holier somewhat than
the rest of the year
while Jerusalem and New York
knelt with bowed heads in the rain,
we passed a highway crucifixion:
one flattened family flanked by two diesel rigs
laying penitent in the grass
spear-pierced with metal scrap and glass splinters.
The shepherd is dead,
the flock slaughtered for the sacrifice.
Sun-up only ghosts will quit their sunday morning sheets.
Body rift from soul,
the divided highway is sunk into the earth like a
dying snake,
irrevocably squirming toward a wheeled oblivion
an artery at once of commerce
and a vein in the arm of the lord.

— RAY HOLAN

Matchbook

IN PARIS, peace talks continued as the Americans . . .

Actually, Napoleon Lawrence wrote more news than he listened to on the radio or watched on television.

. . . Fortunately the police were able to quell the rioting before . . .

At present he was under contract by NBC and his achievements had promoted him nearly to the apex of the network's news-writing staff.

. . . Presidential candidates continued to blast one another today as Mr. . . .

The evening was clear and when Napoleon went to his balcony the air, glowing with the electric rainbow colors of New York, seemed to beckon him out. Nevertheless, he hoped to remain in his apartment that evening and he sat deep within the enveloping black vinyl of his favorite chair which had the security of a small reading lamp attached above it. The chair was located nearly ten feet from the luminous cube which magically displayed the happenings of that nearly-completed day. The 11 p.m. news, like all such reports, captured the full attention and imagination of Napoleon.

. . . It was the third shooting of that sort within . . .

Mr. Lawrence had always been a newsman. He felt it a duty rather than an occupation. It was ironic however that Napoleon, sensitive and gentle, had devoted his life to commentaries and news reports where he was bound to objectivity. Often he found himself within major news situations, and often while there he found himself at the mercy of his acute emotions. As a correspondent-soldier in Europe he was once forcedly dragged by three fellow GI's from the body of a singed infant as a German patrol approached the burnt-out villa. He would often drift into states of wrathful melancholy; he would become frenzied by the death and stench of war crimes which seemed to him such a rash contradiction of natural law. He would try to relax beneath the French night, but tears in his mind would finally break through his tightly closed eyelids. And still Napoleon would report with accuracy to his employers.

. . . A bank spokesman refused to comment whether the scandal . . .

After the war Napoleon watched society in its haphazard strive toward normalcy, and factually he reported the everyday news. He did not endeavor to be sent to Korea but remained to edit and rewrite the correspondences of reporters in Asia for an Eastern newspaper chain. In this task he read between the lines of facts and drew out the images and symbols of disgust so familiar to him. When Korea settled, he returned to his devotion for the everyday

news, and through this news he was certain he had sensed a change, a new atmosphere in America.

. . . The courts were accused of handicapping the police in their fight against crime by . . .

Napoleon refused an editorship in order to report firsthand from Vietnam. His sense of duty and personal commitment had once again driven him off to war. However, after having witnessed the sabotaging of a schoolhouse, Napoleon was encouraged to return home by his editor who noticed a marked deficiency in his reports and features. Napoleon mechanically obliged, and when he had returned to Boston he was offered a position with NBC in New York.

. . . The black protest group refused to . . .

The standard formula of news reports had become an incantation for Napoleon; like magic he became existent in every part of the world and through his imagination he experienced what he heard within the environment where it was occurring. Having been a newsman over thirty years, Napoleon had circled the globe many times and could identify with the starvation in Africa, the disease in China, the unrest behind Europe's curtain, the cool in Moscow. And foremost he sensed with great fear the revolution and search for change in England and America. Napoleon spent much time researching the Elizabethan period since he identified the present with that facet of the past.

. . . Students at the university were not informed of . . .

Most recently reborn in Napoleon was the red color of war. He damned war and was relaxed with his theory that the extremely personal world war of bayonets and bullets was now obsolete. He searched for the ultimate beautiful plan to end small war and civil dispute, but like all men who ponder the question, he could stumble upon no answers. He could only stumble upon more questions, and this frustrated him. He was not satisfied with the social condition of America and the world, and he held no realistic solutions.

. . . It was the most recent in a series of rumors which threaten . . .

Thus Napoleon would live the news from within his lounge chair, and often he would become so lost in himself as to be completely ignorant of the sports and weather. It was not to be tonight, he knew, for he feared his involuntary world tours and would often leave his chair and venture into the New York night in search of *Time* or *Newsweek* or *Esquire*. The beckon of the clear night air had won the battle after all and Napoleon found himself watching the news contract into a tiny pinhead of light on the dark screen.

He backed out of his apartment into the bright hallway. Matthew Brushe, age fifteen, was wandering around out there in his usual garb: cream levis, a green sweat shirt (Columbia University, 1754), bare ankles, and dull cordovan loafers. He addressed the newsman in his usual manner, "Feelin' groovy, Mr. Lawrence?" Napoleon was not up to his usual sarcastic reply, "Uptight," and merely tucked his chin, smiled, and waved a finger in Matthew's direction. Napoleon disappeared into the elevator. He liked Matthew very much; he loved children very much.

Street floor, the elevator opened. Napoleon was surprised to see how

tidy the small lobby appeared. Absent were the scattered newspapers which always made the lobby seem prepared for a crew of painters. The floor looked new, but had merely been waxed. Throw rugs were spread parallel before the chairs and sofas under which the carpets used to lie rolled up. The lamps and fixtures had been blessed with new bulbs which brightened the lobby so much more that Napoleon observed corners and doors he never noticed before. A variety of plants in proportional displays had been arranged in several places. Napoleon was pleased at what was obviously the result of new management, but wondered why he hadn't heard anything. There was no one in the lobby to question, probably, Napoleon thought, because it was so late.

He stepped out of the lobby and skipped down the steps into the night of Fifth Avenue. But it was not Fifth Avenue, at least not the Fifth Avenue familiar to Napoleon. He froze on the bottom stair and was afraid to put his foot down on the sidewalk. The apartments and shops appeared younger and cleaner and even in the night the bricks, glass, and concrete seemed to sparkle. The number of trees growing out of the cement ground along the street itself had doubled or trebled. There was also an unusually great number of cars at the mercy of the traffic lights, but there was a surprising lack of taxis, and more surprising to Napoleon, he did not hear even one temper echo out in the sound of a horn. All the cars were relatively new models and Napoleon could not sight one which had been abused by its owner.

The shock of this view nearly threw Napoleon back off his feet and onto the stairs of his apartment building. Perhaps it would have, had he not been so busy answering the greetings of passers-by. "Good evening, sir." "How are you?" Total strangers, and an unusual blend as well thought Napoleon, viewing the white and black and yellow and red and old and young. There were more people in parade before him than he had ever seen there, day or night. Very few were alone. As a crowd or individually, they all appeared beautiful, not rich, not poor, but content and beautiful.

He composed himself and stepped down. Napoleon felt the sidewalk; it was solid; it was real. Automatically he turned left, toward the center of New York City. Stumbling and turning, trying to see everything, he looked like a farmer from Iowa in New York for the first time. He wished people would quit waving and addressing him; there would be time for that later.

He crossed Fifth Avenue and drifted onto East Drive in Central Park. He rarely saw the park at night. There were so many people moving about, Napoleon could not count them as he often did. He could not spot a policeman, but he did see a man selling balloons.

Napoleon crossed the park diagonally onto West Drive and came out at Fifty-ninth Street by Columbus Circle. He became part of the jovial throng on Broadway. Like most Americans, he always felt at home on Broadway, the way which penetrates the most colorful and lively district in the world. Napoleon was certain he had seen all of the two hundred theatres, the dozens of hotels, and multiple night spots. Tonight he felt all of America was there to see them.

The lesser theatres, bars, and hotels of questionable taste had all been closed down and many of them were remodeled to suit a more cultured

public. Napoleon viewed each street carefully as they intersected Broadway; all were clean and bright and alive. The traffic was patient. The beggars and handicapped, whose tin cups Napoleon could never ignore, were not there. The shady characters of New York were not there. The delinquent youth was not there. The hippies were not there. Napoleon observed their absence but did not wonder where they were. He could not see any children but assumed they were all at home with babysitters.

It took him nearly a half-hour to work his way through the crowd and traffic near Times Square. He stepped into the ground beneath Seventh Avenue and did not have to wait long for the IRT. The train was crowded, but Napoleon expected this and did not mind standing. He was pleased that he did not share an entire car with a policeman. Naturally the subway system had been cleaned, that was how Napoleon wanted it. The four-letter words and public-personal messages had all been painted over. Only four-letter words such as "love" and "good," and phrases such as "God is quite alive" remained.

Napoleon found himself back on the surface near West Fourteenth Street; he walked down Seventh and turned left on Greenwich Avenue. There always were many people in and around the Village, and this night was no exception. But in a way tonight was an exception and Napoleon was disturbed. The shops were all closed; the doors were all closed; the windows were all closed; there was no one inside. People mingled about on the narrow sidewalks. They all carried guidebooks and stopped here and there to discuss and point. The youthful majority was gone; Napoleon saw not one lad with long hair and tight jeans, nor one girl with sandals and flowers floating in her waist-long threadlike pride. He did not see a single love necklace, except the beads being sold by an old woman in a souvenir booth. All he saw were more of the same beautiful people of the park, of Broadway, of the train. People gawking and shooting pictures as if they were at Gettysburg. Napoleon read a sign on Washington Square:

HISTORIC REFORMATION SITE #17
WASHINGTON SQUARE
ONE OF THE BIRTHPLACES OF OUR PRESENT IDEALS

While walking through the people on his way toward the Empire State Building and beyond, Napoleon did not attempt explanation for all he was experiencing; he did not search for answers. He did not question his sanity. The view of New York City he was experiencing was a dream realized, and it seemed to Napoleon that the city was finally existing in the nearly perfect state for which it must have been built. His unrealistic solution for all his questions was Utopia. He was at the moment very pleased.

Napoleon was blissful even as he boarded the Staten Island Ferry. He loved the harbor tour and the views at every angle always left him breathless; he enjoyed having the Upper Bay waters play with his emotions.

To Napoleon's surprise there were very few people on the ferry.

The newsman had little trouble identifying familiar landmarks in Manhattan. Distant fog, however, was mysteriously everywhere else, and

Napoleon, circling the deck, could not make out Jersey City, Staten Island, or Brooklyn; even the Statue of Liberty slipped by unnoticed. When the ferry reached Staten Island, he could not see more than ten yards into the dock through the fog. Napoleon became uneasy; he feared to get off and wished the next ferry for Manhattan would leave soon. For the first time that night Napoleon wished to be back in his apartment.

Once again on the waters, Napoleon felt tired and tense. He began to wonder why the boats were so lonely. Could it be that no one desired to leave New York City? Was that the only place where Utopia existed? Why then was the ferry no more crowded now? Why were people not migrating into Utopia? He feared that people did not accept his dream.

Napoleon stared into the dark and into the river; he could see nothing but a rail before him, which he clutched tightly. Then slowly he spoke to the dark. Very slowly he asked the night, "Where are the poor and ill? Where are the soldiers? The hippies? The confused? Where are the children?"

All men dream of Utopia as a convenient solution, but few men can experience it as Napoleon was. Men who dream of a Utopia are merely dreamers, not realists, and the true Napoleon was indeed a realist. His life, a life of sensitivity and emotion, drew out the finest aspects of reality. And now, within the confines of the bay, wishes and conveniencies were overcome by realities, and Napoleon voluntarily shattered his dream. He knew that the natural order of things had been upset; he was saddened by what he had admitted to himself, and he cried.

Napoleon was exhausted and cold. He pulled his collar up and his hat down, and sitting down slowly beneath a small deck lamp, mechanically he wrote himself a short note, as only a journalist-newsman would, on the back and inside of a matchbook.

By the time Napoleon reached Times Square again he was digusted and unraveled with all the confusion of the night. He longed to be back in his apartment and for some reason he desired to return to Boston. It was after four, yet it seemed to Napoleon that there were more people around the Square than before. They all appeared artificial to him now. "I don't want to know you after all," he would shout to those who greeted him as he fought through the crowd. "Let me through," "Go home," he would order rudely, but the people merely smiled and replied, "Excuse me," or "But of course." Napoleon's coat was unbottoned, his hat gone as he bounced off people and broke into a run down West Forty-fifth Street. Everyone seemed amused with his antics and this made Napoleon run even faster. He did not hesitate to dart out into the street to avoid an abnormally huge crowd. No one blew a horn when he ran diagonally through an intersection; he did not at all care if he was hit. Napoleon moved onto and up Fifth Street and he twisted his way through the crowd which was trying to enter St. Patrick's for five a.m. Mass. He ran faster and faster, never looking back. There was always the throng of beautiful people and always one more block. Finally he began to falter; his head went down; he tripped, diving into a summersault, landing on his right shoulder and bracing up against a black fence. There was red around.

Doctor Raymond hurried to him. His wife hastened into Mr. Lawrence's bedroom to phone the hospital. Ken, age seven, just a moment before sleeping in his father's arms and being carried to the Raymond's apartment next door, was deposited in a chair. The family was returning home from a friend's party when Mrs. Raymond detected a whining sound in Napoleon's apartment. Opening the door, the young doctor saw Napoleon low in the black chair. His wide eyes were staring at a red test pattern whistling on the dead television screen. Napoleon was in deep shock.

Doctor Raymond lifted a matchbook and pencil from the floor. Hastily scribbled on the back and inside of the book's cover were these words:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these the homeless, tempest-tossed to me:
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

Ken was finally awake enough to work his way out of the chair. Rubbing his eyes, he asked, "Is there anything wrong, daddy?"

— DENNIS WISNIEWSKI

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Untitled

what's wrong
with making cowboys
like they used to be:
bristling riders
with bandanas and guns
who speak
perfect outlaw
and die in the dusk
with such grace
after all,
a cowboy never changes
a cowboy never
only his horse

— WILLIAM BUTALA

Untitled

There she is! Serene as ever
Above the mountains,
Rippling the same old smile across the water's darkness,
Proud temptress edging into our sleep,
Apollo's goddess of the night.

What say you, Moon, now we have found you out?
Now we have swept aside your trailing beams
That poetry is made of, and laid bare your gray-brown dust
And brown-gray rock?
What say you to your new, cold, scientific appellation:
"Lunar surface"?
What say you to man's footprints
And our other ensigns planted there and left behind,
For which in turn we scooped up some of you
And have it with us here?
Make no mistake, Moon,

We'll tame you well. This very hour
You're being sorted, weighed, and packaged
For your abject subjection
To man's most unpoetic scrutiny.
You shall be stared at, nudged, dissected,
Sprayed, pounded, sifted, frozen, boiled, injected.
You must give up your secrets, one by one.

What say you now, Moon?
Are you still sorceress of our languid summer nights
And flaming lantern on October fields?

Sail on, then, you with your deceptive ways,
To other rendezvous beyond the distant ridge.
You and your beauties are a part of us now,
And we are part of yours —
Two orbs, linked by a bag of dust and a flying machine,
And a cosmic plan,
Swinging along together down a common path,
Illumined by a common light.

— BETTY R. La FONTAINE

Untitled

you are the prose
of midnight
when all the walls are
safe
and darkness
stops to gather
in our room;
you are a silent figure
like someone brooding
on a shore
while dusk goes gray
and hollow
on the sea;
but most
you are a breathing
when the world is down to
two, and words
have ceased
to mean

— WILLIAM BUTALA

I Saw a Strange Creature, a Bright Ship of the Air

I saw a strange creature,
A bright ship of the air beautifully adorned,
Bearing away plunder between her horns,
Fetching it home from a foray.
She was minded to build a bower in her stronghold,
And construct it with cunning if she could do so.
But then a mighty creature appeared over the mountain
Whose face is familiar to all dwellers on earth;
He seized on his treasure and sent home the wanderer
Much against her will; she went westward
Harbouring hostility, hastening forth.
Dust lifted to heaven: dew fell on the earth,
Night fled thence; and no man knew
Thereafter, where that strange creature went.

— "Sun and Moon"
an Anglo-Saxon poem

THE "strange creature" who bore away the plunder of light "between her horns" in this Old English riddle has been (at least tentatively) conquered again: this time not by the sun, that "mighty creature . . . whose face is familiar to all dwellers on earth," but by those dwellers themselves. Whether the first footholds were made on the moon "much against her will" or not, we can still remark at man's "bright ship of the air . . . bearing away plunder" on her return trip to earth. The technological brilliance of this accomplishment astounds and amazes. The fact of its being done delights our imagination and denigrates — at least for a moment — our sense of spiritual death in this age. Now we harbor a fond appreciation of the benefits of the deed: knowledge of the composition of the universe and the makeup of the world, possible prediction of earthquake, and, immediately, an appreciation of the elements that make life possible here, now.

But one startling contrast appears in the context of a television advertisement for VISTA. The advertisement displays a panorama of pictures of the United States taken from outer space, interspersed with pictures of the poor who live in America. We are asked to marvel at the ability of a country to take such pictures from space, yet unable to cure, or apparently significantly to alleviate its poverty. The contrast is striking, but affords the opportunity to present some other impressions of the landing of the first men on the moon on July 20, 1969. Actually, these are not impressions, not properly so-called; rather, they are reminders of what we know, but often let elude us.

We must, for example, see or understand precisely what happened. Men, organized into a particular society with the end of landing other

men on the moon, used their human ability of organization of the material world, under the guidance of their rational scientific faculties, to realize their goal. What accrued during the actualizing of the purpose has been a significant addition to some of the realms of human knowledge — administration and management, aerodynamics and rocket mechanics, mathematics and physics, agriculture and geology, even city planning and marine science. The accomplishment itself, from the lift-off to the splashdown and the televising of the major events, has added to man's knowledge, too. But in so doing it has reminded us that our knowledge in this respect is confined to manipulating known facts and proven theories — in other words, dealing with matter alone — and is therefore limited to laws of nature and physics and mathematics. It is impossible to return men straight back to earth; it requires strict adherence to more fundamental facts; otherwise men would be burned into oblivion. The observance of that law of nature both preserves and protects man. Our desires have to be accommodated into the realm of achievable possibilities.

More important issues are at hand — issues of evil and good, and how what we have learned as a result of what we have done will help us as men to make our life better, materially, of course, but, even more urgently, spiritually. In this effort to learn for our own good, Auden's "sacred analogies" abound. First, our sense of the earthbound has been diminished and our sense of perspective considerably expanded. Consequently, the human dimension is at the same time both broadened and reaffirmed in its essence. We are reassured of our ability to work in and be master of the world, and, if, as scientists say, the universe is composed of essentially the same matter as the earth, master of that universe. We are equally reastounded at the immensity and grandeur of Creation, and the material smallness of man in it. That smallness is nowhere more aptly demonstrated — analogically — than in political pettiness (since men must and do organize themselves into political communities). The basic human reality of this "smallness" is apparent in the contrast of Armstrong's almost admirable words and the all too conceivable inconsistency of planting the flag of one nation alone on the lunar surface. Far more apt perhaps would have been the *New Yorker's* suggestion to place a white handkerchief on the brown dusty surface of the moon to signify man's common plight. Perhaps not; but we may gain from being reminded hereby that the accomplishment is not that of one nation, but of man: paying the bill does not entitle one to absolute proprietorship. To prove it would be merely to realize that, given even a vicious dictatorship, *and* man's intense will to accomplish what he will, it is conceivable that sooner or later the feat would have become fact. (And is not making "conceivable's" real what the moon flight was "all about"? The accomplishment is not one of a particular nation, but of man, and we ought not to forget that.

Nor ought we to forget the extraordinary humanness of the first moments on the moon — Armstrong's jumping about and long-strided running, his ignoring, at least temporarily, Houston's subtle pleads to pick up rocks in order instead to take pictures of the immediate surroundings. Both time and the tourist arrived on the moon simultaneously.

Another sacred analogy occurs; that is the presence of the individual person in the much larger context of another world – a world, or universe, of which he is very much a part, but even more so, very much above or beyond. Still it all "hangs together": man leaves his world, and returns to it. He aspires to be a god, yet desires not to lose his manhood. All of it is conditioned by a growing realization of the evil and ignorance that have kept him from both his aspiration and his desire; the synthesis is perhaps impossible and in a sense it ought to be; no doubt it will never be accomplished so completely as man would like. Yet the tension thus created, we are sure, in large part determines what men – we – are at any given moment in history.

At the publication of these impressions men will be near landing on the moon a second time. By then our aim may be just a bit better oriented; our purpose that, as William Faulkner said at the Nobel Awards in Stockholm in 1950, man shall prevail, slightly more steadfast; our spirit hoping that our knowledge of our knowledge will not "puff us up" and that our new perspectives will not overshadow our present perspectives and let us forget that, in Auden's words, "given Man, by birth, by education, Imago Dei who forgot his station," we are created men in a created world which we have named and which we are trying – some with desperation, some hardly at all – to civilize. Columbia neither left from nor returned to a world that knows peace; Tranquillity Base is only a lunar place. Man's "lying nature" still convinces him of his righteousness in any given situation, decided on freely by his own will without any previous thought or any serious consideration of any other creature.

The moon may continue to go westward, "harbouring hostility, hastening forth." That same privilege has not been alloted to man.

– RODERICK B. PORTER

Along the Beach Lie

Silent red-bricked palatial intestines,
Ministering pock-marked lanes.
A vapor-hanging expanse of sea
Looms, cloud-capped, above parkway forests, while
Winding pine-edged roads tend
Toward unseen cloistered sands.
English imports sit gauze-covered in mist,
As gaping brewmasters whet their clay.
Love-clasped hands brush sensuously
Against symmetric dark-shadow legs,
And heads rest on loving shoulders
In amber-lit metal chariots.
Farther on the galvan steel pyramids
Wearily link nine to five.
Somber chalk homes of "better-men"
Rim the pebble-sand shores,
As serried groves and Brobdingnagian firs
Entomb a lake.
A sculpted pinnacle of a modern institution
Ticks off the seconds, the miles, that separate it from
Grand-domed worships where
Empty jejune hearts and apathetic souls hide.
A twisting ebony causeway
Blown with scents of sea and life, and lined
With lights appearing hazy-husky,
Inveigling to a better-worse.
A skyline rises triumphant, indignant,
Unaware of the truth.
Trees sprout from nowhere
In craters in concrete pathways.
Fulgent lights, and steel structures
"Bounce" off glass and water.
Rusting beams and plates
Gaze upon a "lost-lovers."
The knob-grooved din grows louder as vulcanized rubber
Grapples with steel-plated archways.
A once great white-shining landmark lies

Low-imposed behind angled girders.
Twisting baked-black roads hang, suspended
Over twisting, warbling blues.
Flashing lights, and signs that read,
"Turn left from island on green arrow only."
Twin towers rise from
Green ship-studded waters, as
Lovely-legged girls scurry, noticed,
From nowhere to no place.
The green and yellow smoke-belching monsters
Suffocate everyone and everything.
A tall antenna-structure
Holds in awe two guardian beasts,
As lumbering traffic moves at a
Pall-bearer's pace.
A bronze-radiant cupola sedately lies
On a jutting rocky pollex, miles from
A new modern form being resurrected
From a twisted molten maze.
Weeds sprout defiantly
From sidewalk cracks.
Colors change darker, darker;
And buildings become smaller, smaller.
Papers flutter across a street,
And ripple-swaggers lean on posts, in stupors, gazing.
A blue sky hides behind a new sky,
A yellow-black smoke suspended there.
Chain-linked curtains hang, protecting
Burned-out empty shells,
And brick-shattered casements hide behind
Rusting high-rise balconies.
Rats scramble, and the air reeks
From excrement exuded when need be.
Windows shattered,
Twisted, defiled hulks corrode on deserted streets.
A pregnant adolescent walks,
Head down, hoping.
An old man no longer hopes.

—TIM SROKA

Night Butterfly

Cross over beyond your fields and your haunts.
Let day light color shine behind.
Melt into oozing night,
Nocturne breathing black into your eclipsing self.
Float through the starless shroud,
In murky velvet seek out your jack o'dreams.
There, a raft of rocks sits high on a dank fen
Teeming in bloated silence
Save the lone bubble-belch of a drowned earth.
Waiting, a thin phantom sits
Spinning out a life into a dense corner of slimy stone,
In the moist cave of dim eternal weaves a musty bed of fetid silk.
The floating web beckons as moonglow
You finally flutter home there you are
Gummed to your goal . . . and the spider crawls
As the dust falls from your furious wings.

— JAMES I. O'CONNOR

Toward a Discussion of Creative Scepticism

Like the wind,
my god comes to me.
And when the small utensils of my soul
are not battened down in certitude,
He makes
a wond'rous noise.

WHAT is creative scepticism? I have given a clue to my own brand of creative scepticism in my poem "Divine Shivaree," (reprinted from *tangent*, Vol. 1, no. 3, Fall, 1966).

If, however, I were strongly motivated by the notion of nescience, i.e., that God and all that goes beyond natural phenomenon is unknowable, I would say something like, "What's that? Something you eat?" or "I don't know." Yet the creative sceptic must be, at base, one who holds the notion of nescience.

If I were a dogmatist, I would probably say that creative scepticism is out-and-out heresy in that it refuses to hold to any dogma. However, there is a subtile distinction to be made. A man who holds that all dogma is wrong and that creative scepticism is the only road to follow would be making a dogmatic statement and would not really be a creative sceptic after all.

If I were an atheist, I might say that the creative sceptic doesn't believe in God but won't get off the fence, or off his knees, as the case may be. Today, the creative sceptic, in most instances, would not worship the "communal" God with a great deal of ease. Perhaps, he might not worship any God at all, as such; yet he would be against the kind of atheism that is a mode of "Spiritual obtuseness." (SK-148) (Margaret L. Wiley, *The Subtle Knot, Creative Scepticism in Seventeenth-Century England*, (London, 1952), p. 148. Hereinafter, all documentation referring to this work will appear within the text, indicated as SK, and followed by the proper page number.) In fact, this is the only definition of atheism which he would accept. It should be mentioned here that I speak of the pure creative sceptic. In reality, such a creature does not exist.

If I were a Deist (or any other "ist"), I would espouse creative scepticism in dealing with that period between God's creation of the world and his final judging of it. And yet, I would raise a mighty Deistic howl if the sceptic suggested the possibility of no creation by a Divinity or of a final judging by that same God. I would raise only a Deistic moan should the creative sceptic

suggest the possibility of some validity in the notion of a God who is in a direct communion with each person at all times and who can and does intervene in history. The creative sceptic would not necessarily sneer at Aunt Sephronie who makes a flying novena to St. Philomena for little Butchie's report card and reiterates her faith in novenas when Butchie appears on the scene with straight "A's." The Deist would excuse himself like a gentleman, leave the room, and quietly throw up.

If I were a mystic, I would probably be about ninety percent sceptic. To answer the question, "What is a mystic?" is laughably beyond the scope of this paper, much less this paragraph. I offer two quotes from the late Evelyn Underhill, the noted scholar of mysticism.

In *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature of Man's Spiritual Consciousness,* Miss Underhill writes:

> . . . mysticism avowedly deals with the individual not as he stands in relation to the civilization of his time, but as he stands in relation to truths that are timeless.
>
> . . . mysticism is the *expression* of the innate tendency of the human spirit toward complete harmony with the transcendental order.

St. Paul, for example, "refused to accept the dogmas in which the faith of the world had been enshrined because his own faith had outgrown these dogmas . . . living with God face to face, they have cared little for the pictures which other men have taken of him. Such is the scepticism of the mystic." (SK-25)

And yet we must be wary of a kind of "despair mysticism" which springs up wherever scepticism is practiced and makes men timorous. It is what Margaret Wiley calls a "camp follower" and what the Roman Church in modern times has condemned as Fideism. (SK-39)

I submit that the mystic as creative sceptic is the mystic as pilgrim more than the mystic as naval contemplator.

> Glimpses do ye seem to see of that mortally intolerable truth; that all deep, earnest thinking is but the intrepid effort of the soul to keep the open independence of her sea; while the wildest winds of heaven and earth conspire to cast her on the treacherous, slavish shore. (Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick or The Whale.)*

The mystic-as-pilgrim would search far beyond fact and opinion and dogma and scientific measureables. I say the mystic would be probably ninety percent creative sceptic because he would be unwilling to affirm the possibility of nothing beyond the aforementioned fact, opinion, dogma, and scientific measureable.

And so, depending upon the amount of creativity and scepticism present in each of us, we are more, or maybe less, comfortable with the two words: creative scepticism.

Creative scepticism embodies nescience; it is prone to fall prey to the very kind of dogmatizing which it condemns; it smacks of atheism, agnosti-

cism, and Deism. In fact, it smacks of everything. What, then, is it? It is a process. It is an open-ended approach to reality. It actively seeks truth. It is a *modus operandi*, which, as soon as it discovers a truth, immediately questions that truth to discover the greater truth beyond it. It has no axe to grind. It studies the chain of being link by link without a Faustian desire to know the end. It "hangs loose."

It is the questioning of reality and the mode of questioning that raises creative scepticism above mere philosophical scepticism which, as I understand it, is a kind of habitual doubting. The creative sceptic doubts for the sake of faith. The creative sceptic digs out the grain of truth in every heresy, the element of fortune in every misfortune. The creative sceptic follows a *via media* in all things. He abhors extremes. He is a tolerant man.

When I first began this study, it occurred to me that if a creative sceptic is truly a creative sceptic, he will sooner or later question the process of creative scepticism itself. Perhaps it is because he abhors extremes that he will not go to this extreme. But that's not quite it. The more I read, I found that each creative sceptic had his "hang-up," his security, what the Sartrian psychoanalyst would call his original choice, his cardinal hinge which allows him to swing out into the rich and fruitful process of creative scepticism. It became apparent to me that only a secure human being can rove; if he is insecure he will wander aimlessly. "He who loses his life will gain it." Lose his life to something, anything: a commitment. I would go so far as to say that I admire Sartre, who, as I interpret him, is secure in his insecurity. His hang-up is not having hang-ups. Existence precedes essence. You must search before you can be a searcher. You must act before you can know action — or — "How can we tell the danced from the dance?" How can you know the essence of the dance before you have a dancer, dancing?

"In fact, Joseph Glanvill doubts whether, in view of the apparently ineradicable human tendency to prefidence, there can be any pure scepticism." (SK-220) Prefidence, as I see it, is that phenomenon we all experience of wanting to share, if not sell, our own enthusiastic affirmations — our hang-ups, as it were. A human tendency, I think, far more incurable and genuine than apathy, indifference, and sheer dubious scepticism.

Richard Baxter, in *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, treats prefidence in his own fine style when he writes:

> . . . that nothing so much hindreth the Reception of the Truth, as urging it on Men with too harsh Importunity, and falling too heavily on their Errors: For hereby you engage their Honour in the business and they defend their errors as themselves, and stir up all their Wit and ability to oppose you: In controversies it is fierce Opposition which is the Bellows to kindle a resisting Zeal. (SK-162)

In "Treatise of Knowledge and Love Compared," Baxter writes:

> The prefident, hasty judgers have so many bastards of their own brains to maintain because they think it necessary to defend all the opinions they have ever embraced. (SK-162)

We are not lead directly into the center of the question: "If the creative sceptic must always maintain a sense of 'equipoise', a sense of never having arrived, why would he trouble to write his notions down?" Is this not like a pacifist waging a war to end all wars? Why would he not instead become a hewer of wood or a digger of crabgrass or a *puller of grass?* It seems that the situation forces the creative sceptic into action.

Margaret Wiley, in *The Subtle Knot, Creative Scepticism in the Seventeenth Century England,* (the major source for this paper), elaborates, in talking of Richard Baxter.

> Perhaps the farthest reaching and the least predictable result of England's attempt to enforce religious conformity was that the more active spirits among the dispossessed clergy were forced thereby to give reasons for the faith within them. . . . For had he not been, along with other non-conformists, the victim of a kind of Protestant Inquisition, deprived of his living and hounded from place to place, he undoubtedly would have continued to minister quietly and unobtrusively to his own congregation, and, content to practice his faith instead of accounting for it, would have left no written testimonials of its riches. . . . We have the basis for an insight into the non-conformist mind at the point at which it had stripped away all the spiritual luxuries of peace and was seeking to propagate only what was the essential to the continuance of its faith. (SK-178)

I feel that this point, i.e., that the context in which the creative sceptics wrote was not peaceful, is an important point to bear in mind in reading them. In fact, I would side with Rene Girard, the existentialist literary critic, (in "Existentialism and Criticism," in *Sartre, A Collection of Critical Essays,* Edith Kern, ed. See also, "Sainte-Beauve on His Own Method," in *Criticism: the Major Texts,* Walter Jackson Bate, ed.) in asking that question of every work of art. Why was it produced, in what context, out of what necessity? And even this *action* is consonant with the creative sceptic's attempt to find the element of fortune in every unfortunate situation. We must understand the notions before we can understand the actions. I might allude here to Coventry Patmore, who acted out his mystical beliefs by burning most of his mystical poetry and we are the losers for it. Or are we? We do not have the poetry but we have the act of his burning it. Just as we have Gaugin's burning of the frescoed hut. Perhaps this is why avowed pacifists disturb the peace.

No, the creative sceptic is not a drop-out from life. Though he will not make a habit of proselytizing his way of life, he will enter the foray when freedom is threatened. He will act as mediator in quarrels. He is not a stoic.

Having discussed the general attitudes of the process of creative scepticism and having hinted at the direction it has taken in contemporary thought, I will now limit the remainder of this paper to Margaret Wiley's book, *The Subtle Knot.* After a cursory description of the history of scepticism, I will concentrate, as does Miss Wiley, on five representatives of the approach in seventeenth-century England. Her chapter headings are:

John Donne and the Poetry of Scepticism; Sir Thomas Browne

and the Genesis of Paradox; Richard Baxter and the Problem of Certainty; Jeremy Taylor, the Sceptic as Churchman; Joseph Glanvill, Self-Conscious Sceptic.

And now, with typical feminine aplomb, having just promised to restrict myself to *The Subtle Knot*, I will quote from Margaret Wiley's latest book, *Creative Sceptics*. Legitimately so, I think, because Miss Wiley began writing *The Subtle Knot* in 1937 and published it in 1952. She published *Creative Sceptics* in 1966 in London. She is often more succinct in the latter book.

From *Creative Sceptics:*

> The Greek philosopher Pyrrho, who lived in the fourth century B.C., is the father of creative scepticism . . . In his search for truth, Pyrrho emphasized three key words: *isosothenia, epoche,* and *ataraxia.* By *isosothenia* he meant the necessity of balancing every statement by its opposite if one is to approximate the truth. Just as an isosceles triangle has two equal sides, so the structure of truth must contain balanced opposites. One may, for example, state that all Indians are essentially spiritual-minded, but it will be necessary at once to counter this with the statement that all Indians are essentially materialistic and let this apparent contradiction work in one's mind until through the attempt to reconcile these opposites something close to the whole truth emerges. *Epoche,* meaning suspension of judgment. There is little temptation to make snap judgments if one is always self-reminded that there is probably an equal amount of truth in the opposite of each statement he makes. The purpose of practicing these two techniques of truth-seeking was to insure *ataraxia,* that peace of mind which sceptics were seeking along with Stoics and Epicureans although by way of a different road. Today the name 'ataraxics' has survived as the designation for a series of tranquillizing drugs . . . Pyrrho was seeking to tranquillize the minds of essentially dogmatic men through the intellectual discipline of scepticism.
>
> After Pyrrho, the movement had its ups and downs, and the genuine Pyrrhonists struggled continually to avoid dogmatism (for example, that of the academic Sceptics) as the rock on which tranquillity of mind could most easily be wrecked. As a precaution, the Roman philosopher Sextus Empiricus in the second century A. D. again emphasized, in the true spirit of Pyrrho, the function of antinomy and paradox as a means of maintaining *isosothenia* and *epoche.* During the Middle Ages this kind of scepticism, which we may call positive and creative rather than negative and sterile (as is dogmatic disbelief), found expression in thinkers like Nicholas of Cusa and Abelard . . .
>
> . . . The line runs from Montaigne and Pascal in France to such seventeenth-century English sceptics as Donne, Browne, Baxter, Taylor and Glanvill and thence to their Romantic rediscoverers, Blake and Coleridge in England and the Transcendentalists in America. Today, the heirs seem to be the

existentialists of France, Germany, and America, whose thought can be shown to share many areas with that of the Orient, particularly with that of India . . .

It is of interest to note that in *Creative Sceptics* Wiley treats the thought of India, Edmund Spenser, Francis Bacon, Milton, Jonathan Edwards, Coleridge, Emerson, Melville in *Moby Dick*, Henry James, Henry Adams, and of course, Sartre, Jaspers, Heidegger, Kirkegaard, Kafka, and throughout both books, Jesus.

The seventeenth century made striking use of the *epoche*, the suspension of judgment aspect of creative scepticism, in the form of progressive revelation, which holds that all truth has not yet been delivered to man. (SK-34) On scriptural interpretation, for example, they were asking how the animals were disseminated over the face of the earth after the Ark docked on Mt. Arrarat. The Cambridge Platonists tended toward a rational theology (SK-92) while at Oxford, a group of divines, the Latitudinarians, were active. The men of latitude were open to a wide and roomy tolerance, holding that most religious matters were non-essential and not worth quibbling over.

This seems a natural point to introduce the word *Irenicism*. It is a peaceful, conciliatory theology concerned with securing Christian unity. It was an active "ism" in the seventeenth century in a slightly different way from today's ecumenism. Christian sects were at each other's throats and people were suffering terrible persecutions. But then, one is given to wonder if today's ecumenism would have such force had it not been for six million Jews who smoked up the skies of a Christian nation.

Pyrrhonism had encouraged not only a doubt of religious revelation, but also a comparison of all religions. Scholasticism was rejected.

Basil Willey, in *The Seventeenth Century Background*, writes:

> To Bacon the logic-spinning of the schoolmen was a kind of forbidden knowledge; it was a presumptuous attempt to read the secret purposes of God and to force his works into conformity with the laws of the human mind. This was for him the real *hubris*, the metaphysical arrogance, which "disdains to dwell upon particulars," and confidently explains all things by syllogism. The true humility is the attribute of the Baconian scientist, who is content to come forth into light of things, and let nature be his teacher.

Thus, Irenicism, the rejection of scholasticism, the scientific method, the comparison of all religions as encouraged by Pyrrhonism, leads us to this quote from Willey:

> From this (comparison of religions) came inevitably the observation that all creeds have many points in common and, in time, the attempt to rediscover and reconstruct the original belief from which the separate religions were supposed to have varied. And from this observation and this attempt I think it not too much to say were derived in a straight line the lofty,

detached scepticism of Montaigne and the deism of Lord Herbert. (SK-49, 50)

Douglas Bush reminds us in *English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century, 1600-1660* that the "working philosophy inherited by seventeenth century writers was Christian humanism." He reminds us, too, that of the

> two large elements of that doctrine which we meet everywhere in the seventeenth century, one is the concept of "right reason," the eternal and harmonious law of God and nature written in every human mind and heart; the other is that of the great chain of being, the hierarchical order which descends from God through angels and men to plants and stones, which at once distinguishes and unites all levels of existence.

Hence, we can more easily see the development of creative scepticism in terms of Deism and a natural religion.

Lord Herbert, Basil Willey reminds us in his book, "differs from such men as Baxter, Cromwell or Jeremy Taylor mainly in that, not content with reducing the creed to the minimum possible number of fundamentals, he goes behind Christianity itself, and tries to formulate a belief which shall command the universal assent of all men as men."

Margaret Wiley would put more emphasis upon nescience, dualism, and paradox, feeling that right reason and the chain of being had their full flowering in the eighteenth century.

Dualisms in the seventeenth century were not only of the body-soul dichotomy, but also the dualism of faith and reason, good and evil, mind and matter, reason and fancy, and man and the world. The creative sceptic will attempt to treat the various dualisms in equipoise. He will be up against the man-who-opts-for-faith-against-the-man-who-opts-for-reason and/or the optimistic view of the goodness of man vs. the pessimistic view of the depravity of man. The creative sceptic will deal with both in terms of paradox. These dualisms through the equipoise of the sceptics will develop into the vision of Romantic Irony. The vision of Romantic Irony, according to my notes from the Northrop Frye Lectures at the Case Western Reserve University in 1966, is "the perception of the ambivalence of genius and demon, the inseparable good and evil in man, and the ambivalence of beauty and pain." In the Romantic Revolution, Frye said, civilization is no longer seen from the perspective of the human body, but as extensions of it. The consciousness of man is emancipated and he revolts against time and space.

I see an attempt at resolving some of these dualisms, today, in terms of Marshall MacLuhan (somewhat) and the existentialist's concept of the lived body. But suddenly we have the dualism of being and nothingness and I and thou; and good and evil still exist in the most blatant forms despite the fact that we don't know what to call them.

Margaret Wiley says it far more sensitively:

> All of these pronouncements concerning body and soul lose none of their relevance if it is "discovered" by psychologists

> or philosophers that, in fact, no such dichotomy exists in the human being. For such dualisms are not so much descriptive as symbolic; and no matter how their definition changes from one generation to another, there has never thus far been eradicated from human experience the sense that man is bifurcated and torn and that in spite of this he must desperately strive toward wholeness. If ever man becomes conditioned, over a period of several generations, to thinking of his life in wholly other terms, then it will be time to revise our conclusions concerning dualism. (SK-83)

And it is the existence of dualism in reality that creates the title, *The Subtle Knot*. It is taken from Donne's poem "The Ecstacy":

> *As our blood labours to beget*
> *spirits, as like souls as it can,*
> *because such fingers need to knit*
> *that subtile knot, which makes us man: . . .*

> "The subtile knot which makes us men," says Miss Wiley, represents not only an intellectual awareness of the fundamental dualism of body and spirit but a more than intellectual perception of the fact that the human entity, which is the prototype of all truth, is not simple and direct but complex and oblique. Hence, simple truths about body or spirit cannot give the sense of the knotted whole, for the knot is something other than the two strands which compose it. The sceptic finds himself continually puzzled and humbled and perennially pulled back into the orbit of truth by the recognition of this fact. Hence the paradoxes by which he tries to keep himself and the world from forgetting it. (SK-61, 62)

Bearing in mind all that we have said about dualism and paradox and creative scepticism, it is easier to understand Glanvill's belief in witches in light of the following statement by Douglas Bush: " . . . one could hardly accept God and His angels without accepting Satan and his."

* * *

I. JOHN DONNE AND THE POETRY OF SCEPTICISM (1573-1631)

Donne, who died in 1631, is the first figure to be considered and he will exhibit the confusion of the early part of the century.

> Although diverse elements had contributed to the intellectual unsettling which was to give the period its distinctive character, the Copernican revolution has long stood as a convenient symbol and focus of this dilemma. As a result of scientific experimentation and discovery, faith and knowledge, passion and reason struggled for supremacy, and there no longer existed, either in the scientific world or in the soul of man, an infallible authority which should silence all controversy. The Renaissance man, once the first fine enthusiasm for the new learning had subsided, discovered that the very axis of his universe had

> slipped, and his minor uncertainties were overlaid by the doubt that there was any sure foundation for human knowledge, whether in science or in the more immediate and pressing areas of ethics and religion. (SK-121)

In Donne we have the reactions of a poet to this situation. Because of his position in the century, he embraces creative scepticism to help him deal with his doubts and his nescience while the world of values was collapsing around him. Unlike the later sceptics, Donne was not relaxed in his approach. He had very little of the Pyrrhonic *ataraxia* in him. He is more the man troubled by doubting questions than by creative questions. In one of his sermons, he said, " ' . . . in a troubled misery Men are always more religious than in a secure peace'." (SK-126) Even in his love poems, with their quick slides into disillusionment and quasi-cynicism, the echo of "sour grapes" almost overpowers the song of creative scepticism.

II. SIR THOMAS BROWNE AND THE GENESIS OF PARADOX (1605-1682)

Browne lived and died in the century. I find Browne, the Norwich physician, the most delightful figure of the five. He is a joyous man who is deeply reverent of the truth; he is original and creative in the sense that anything and everything is worth investigation. Early in this paper, when I spoke of the cardinal hinge which permits a man to swing out into creative questioning, I thought mostly of Browne. I think he was able to be so calm and free in his questioning because he felt absolutely certain that one day God would give him all the answers. His questions were always framed in the eternal perspective.

Margaret Wiley says, in discussing Browne, that:

> Just because the final outcome, truth, is the responsibility not of man but of God, there is possible a certain human poise and grace which could be achieved on no other basis. Once Browne has revealed this underpinning of his thought, he overcomes the temptation to linger among the ultimates and concerns himself rather with the practical problems of thinking. (SK-142)

Browne was, happily, somewhat intellectually bi-lingual. He said:

> I have . . . one common and authentic philosophy I learned in the schools, whereby I discourse and satisfy the reason of other men; another more reserved, and drawn from experience, whereby I content my own. (SK-143)

To which Margaret Wiley responds:

> The seventeenth century, if it knew the sources of a deeper despair than the Romantics, was also capable of relaxing the intellectual effort to know, without throwing reason to the winds. This ability is a close corollary of Browne's confidence in the revelation of "the last Day." (SK-143)

How, you may ask, if he is so blissfully bi-lingual, do we know both his tongues? It's the old story of the pirated manuscript. Browne's *Religio Medici*

circulated privately among his friends for seven years, and was published in a pirated edition in 1642. He could only make a gallant effort to educate the reader and at the same time preserve his own intellectual integrity.

The description Miss Wiley offers of the *Religio Medici* reminds me of some of the journal writings of Gabriel Marcel in that

> . . . it is not a book in which the author interrupts his process of truth-finding to present certain definite conclusions which he will defend against all comers. The process will continue while Thomas Browne has breath, and each "maturer discernment" will cancel a certain portion of what he had thought was truth. (SK-145)

Our text compares him to Melville. It is more than a question of style. The two sing in the same key. Both stand for a ranging conviction without dogmatism. It is perhaps noteworthy that Melville quotes Browne in the chapter entitled "Extracts" in *Moby-Dick*. In fact Melville possessed, in his own library, Browne's *Vulgar Errors* and the *Religio Medici*, along with Montaigne's essays and Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*.

Notice the similarities to Melville's style. This is Browne:

> The life therefore, and spirit of all our actions is the resurrection, and a stable apprehension that our ashes shall enjoy the fruit of our pious endeavours: without this, all religion is a fallacy, and those impieties of Lucian, Euripides, and Julian, are no blasphemies, but subtle verities, and Atheists have been the only philosophers. (SK-149)

Miss Wiley agrees that Browne is a natural believer because he

> really knew that the intellect is not the only road to truth, and . . . by virtue of that instinct managed to unify his world. Men who were content with the intellect alone landed in untenable half-truths and despair, but Browne's essential wholeness made him shy of backing reason against faith or faith against reason. What may have looked to the world like inconsistency or even the balancing of dualisms was really the flowering of a "natural" belief, a conscientious maintenance of the "subtle knot." (SK-159)

III. RICHARD BAXTER AND THE PROBLEM OF CERTAINTY (1615-1691)

A pastor first and a writer afterward, Baxter was mainly concerned with the essential and catholic core of Christianity which could serve as the sure ground of unity. (SK-161)

Baxter, then, is an Irenecist. I have quoted him earlier in treating prefidence. Baxter falls into Wiley's group of sceptics largely because he was a man of controversy. The times forced him to write. If not so great a sceptic, he was a questioner by temperament and by his opposition to the times. He was a man secure in God and possessed of great piety and devotion. In fact, he appears in Anne Freemantle's anthology of *Protestant Mystics*. "Nothing," says Baxter, "is so certainly known as God and yet nothing so imperfectly." (SK-167)

In another work, he writes, "There is a great deal of difference between searching as a learner, and disputing as a caviller, or boldly determining as a competent judge." (SK-169).

Thus, we have sketched Baxter as an Irenecist, as a pilgrim-mystic, and a pastor. He was a defender of atheists and infidels and an implacable foe of Rome. But the thing that puts him in this collection is, I think, this statement by Miss Wiley:

> Indeed, in these early days he saw no intellectual difficulties whatsoever in Christianity. His blind faith was sufficient. But once he entered the ministry and shouldered the responsibility for other men's faith, he began to question the truth of scriptures and the immortality of the soul. (SK-170)

He preserved the subtle knot in terms of his own experience of the duality of flesh and spirit *within himself*. He wrote many pamphlets to seek out the reasonable truth in each position on the theory that every dogma presents a partial insight into the truth. (SK-174)

IV. JEREMEY TAYLOR, THE SCEPTIC AS CHURCHMAN (1613-1667)

Taylor was a "Latitudinarian who maintained a relatively untroubled theological position, founded upon the minimum essentials of faith and a holy life. Perhaps it is because he has left no account of how he won his way through to such a position that Taylor proceeds along what seems relatively solid ground to his ultimate goal, the elaboration of a Christian Irenic." (SK-179)

> Taylor believes that God has left accessible to men whatever truths they need to know for the conduct of their lives and that those will become available if men will only proceed by cautious ignorance. What he deplores is the insistence that one's own opinions are really the axioms of religion and that whoever does not conform to them is lost. (SK-183)

Taylor is classed as a creative sceptic by Miss Wiley because of his Irenicism, his wide toleration, his ability to make the most of men's intentions when dealing with heretics and so remain charitable toward their achievements. He seems to be heavily weighted on the faith side of the reason-faith dualism.

In this era of Post-Vatican II, there isn't anything startling about these statements of and about Taylor. However, when I was in high school, a statement like the ten-liner above would be cause for a high power discussion series by the Sodality after which Taylor would be indicted on several counts of heresy. Furthermore, there was an Index and we would have been able to read Taylor only in abstracts and excerpts, preferably in a book with an imprimatur. I do not bring this up to play the when-I-was-a-girl game, but rather to give a thirteen-year guage to the imagination to gain a better proportion of Taylor's thought a dozen times thirteen years ago.

V. JOSEPH GLANVILL, SELF-CONSCIOUS SCEPTIC (1636-1680)

A Latitudinarian divine, Joseph Glanvill reacted against the dominant Aristotelianism almost as much as Puritan dogmatism.

Miss Wiley remarks that "whereas Donne's treatment of nescience takes the form of an agonized cry, Glanvill's has behind it the assurance of a man who has come to terms with this nescience and has made creative use of it." (SK-199) He feels that "unless a man recognizes that his knowledge is never coincident with that of God, he is in constant danger of succumbing to dogmatism." (SK-200) Glanvill says, in a marvelous metaphor, that "dogmatism has a tendency to create agoraphobia of the spirit." (SK-200)

Glanvill is most quotable when he says "the unexamined life is not worth living." (SK-204) He is also aware of the impossibility of changing *totally* our cradle notions of truth. (SK-204)

On his defense of witches, Miss Wiley writes:

> His generation valiantly, if somewhat blindly, insisted not only upon the fundamental dualism of body and spirit but also upon the subsidiary categories of good and bad spirits. It was at this point that it became necessary for them to assert the existence of witches, for doubt cast upon the being of such evil spirits might undermind the whole system and leave men nothing but the bare reality of matter. Even though Glanvill's defense of witches appears reasonable from this point of view, nevertheless it involved him in the kind of philosophical difficulties which usually spring from basing a whole system, like an inverted pyramid, upon a single all-important tenet. But for our purposes the defence is significant because it shows Glanvill maintaining dualism (in this case the dualism of body and spirit) at all costs and thus proving himself a thoroughgoing sceptic. (SK-206-07)

A member of the Royal Society, Glanvill held that reason and faith were at perfect unison: the disharmony was in fancy. (SK-210) Miss Wiley is most acute in her perception when she says that

> . . . this kind of union always breeds one more dualism. To solve the dualism of imagination and fancy set against religion bolstered by reason, nothing less than the Romantic Revolution was to be required. (SK-211)

Wiley offers thumbnail dossiers on the five men covered above.

> Taylor is distinguished by the comparative regularity and conventionality of his religious position. Donne has travelled from an inherited Catholicism to an uneasy Anglicanism; Browne, a nominal Anglican, felt the necessity of defending himself, as a physician, against the charge of atheism; Baxter, the Puritan, waged a lifelong struggle to grasp and transmit the core of Christianity in spite of persecution for his nonconformity; and Glanvill tried to reconcile his Anglicanism with his deep scientific faith. (SK-179)

The whole study of creative scepticism is mighty relevant to our times. I hope now that old copies of the Index are being used to wrap up all that spoiled fish, Catholic scholars might investigate the tracts of the English

writers of the seventeenth century who lived in a world of rapid change and shaky dogma. But not me; I'm off to the Institute of Art where I can learn to make Catholic Art Calendars portraying the wife of Jesus, provided that creative scepticism will have considered such a thing within the realm of reverent possibility and not blasphemous jocosity.

— MARY ANN MAGNER

•

Summer Aftermath

A syncopated stillness
brushed between the fire escapes
and squeezed inside the cracks
of the worn-out night.

Then rancid fire flushed throughout
in one brilliant snarl —
raping the beloved city . . .
of Peace.

— PATRICIA MASKOW

Ageing

Today winter surprised us,
the tree turned to skeletons
while the sun melted
into a tiny phantom wafer
swept by the October wind.
A summer-flung kite
hangs forgotten
on rigid branches.
and green lizards no longer stretch
in golden air,
or toads grumble at the sticky sun,
or frogs chorus lullabies to the moon.
Over green bright fields
where children climbed
in wild laughter,
white, blue skies
fade
into brown pallor
of falling nightshades
upon your face.

— GIACOMO STRIULI

Goethe: The Modern Practice

> To me there is no past or future in art. If a work of art cannot live in the present it must not be considered at all. The art of the Greeks, of the Egyptians, of the great painters who lived in other times, is not an art of the past; perhaps it is more alive today than it ever was.
>
> — Pablo Picasso

I.

PICASSO has a greater faith in the durability of art than I. For him it is always independent of the times, is always the singular event and transcendent. I feel none of his smugness.

All of the past thought on Art is becoming irrelevant, because man as we know him will be changed, will no longer be a creature of uncertainty.

There has always been a conflict between technology and Art. They have fought each other because science has the capacity to change man materially, and in a gross way, while Art can only appeal to the mind, to the aesthetics of a reader or listener, and act to persuade. But now science can be Art, with all of its manifold implications and with consequences that Goethe never dreamed of. Art is one way that man has used to bind himself up with Nature, because man in his upward climb divorced himself, became the product of the rules he discovered in Nature, to the point where he now bends and twists them and sits fairly close to the top of it in clinical scrutiny.

The historical antecedents of technological art are present today. Our popular songs reveal this reliance on technology. Their effect could not be produced without it. With developments in technology outstripping humanistic thought, and in a real way, negating it, then to speak of a traditional, even a revolutionary art, is absurd. The artist and the scientist will be merged into one, as the producer and the recording star and the composer are merged into one artist, each being responsible for only one part of the finished, sparking, electronic whole. It is Marinetti's world we will live in, and all of the past will be as incomprehensible as the stone faces on Easter Island.

The artist first wanted to reproduce Nature. Then he wanted to make it better, by personalizing it, by ordering it. And soon we will have a synthetic mirror to hold up to ourselves. Man can never be happy in this world, unless he is made to be happy. But the mistaking of art for electronic sensata, an art that affects the participant in a real way, is a possibility, and one that should not be laughed off, because this is but one aspect of the technological revo-

lution that will change man dramatically, and make him evolve into his third stage — that is, the loss of his humanity.

Those of us living today, not our clothes, not our automobiles, but our bodies, our minds, when examined in the future, will resemble the original Ford.

II.

ALL artists are, to some extent, philosophers, and it is this union of art and philosophy, one that differs with the "ordinary" artist in that it is a concrete union rather than an implied one, that typifies the work of Goethe. This union is especially evident in *The Sorrows of Young Werther,* where Goethe presents his problems within the framework of a pastoral tale of love.

When Goethe asks in *Werther,* "Can we never take pleasure in nature without having recourse to art," he is asking the question which was answered, ultimately, in the thought of the Moderns, in the literature of our own day, and which answer forms the focal point of our criticism.

To differentiate between the roles Goethe played, to separate him and study him according to his work as scientist, philosopher, and poet, is impossible. But it is as an artist that Goethe will be treated, with all of the many implications, and all of the stumbling blocks.

When speaking with J. P. Eckermann on the artistic purpose of *Faust,* Goethe states emphatically that,

> It was, in short, not in my line, as a poet, to strive to embody anything *abstract.* I received in my mind impressions, and those of a sensual, animated, charming, varied, hundredfold kind, just as lively imagination presented them, and I had, as a poet, nothing more to do than artistically round off and elaborate such views and impressions, and by means of lively representation so to bring them forward that others might receive the same impression in hearing or reading my representation of them.

The concept of Art that Goethe speaks of here is notably significant, because it is a statement of the pre-Modern philosophy of Art. The "lively imagination" of Goethe is something extrinsic to the artist, while the imagination of the Modern is the author's mind, his own peculiar view coupled with the creative function. Nature for the Modern is but the raw material of Art. For Goethe, and the Romantics, Nature is the aim of Art. Goethe feels loss by his inability to grasp Nature and the "ultimate phenomena" of Nature that cannot be grasped. He says in *Werther:*

> A dim vastness is spread before our souls; the perceptions of our mind are as obscure as those of our vision; and we earnestly strive to surrender up our whole being that it may be filled with the complete and perfect bliss of one glorious emotion. But alas! when we have attained our object, when the distant *there* becomes the present here, all is changed: we are as poor and as circumscribed as ever, and our souls still languish for unattainable happiness.

There cannot be, then, in an artistic work, an implicit understanding of the creation, either by the author, or his audience. The artist cannot ultimately know the subject of his Art. This does not mean that Goethe would affirm, as Oscar Wilde will

later, that the artist should not want to elevate Nature, because Nature is imperfect, and only Art can purify its imperfections.

Goethe's artist presents the world as he finds it, or theoretically does. Experience gains a primary importance, the Goethian "rounding off and elaboration," a secondary one. If Art originates in the understanding, then Goethe asserts that the artist is a kind of spectator, observing forms and identifying them. How different Goethe's concept is can be seen in Ernst Cassirer's statement of Modern theory, that "forms cannot simply be impressed on our minds; we must produce them in order to feel their beauty."

But in Goethe there are the seeds of Modern thought. When he speaks of "The Demoniac," in *Truth and Fiction Relating to My Life*, he speaks, unknowingly, of the Modern artist. Cassirer tells us, "He thought he could detect in nature — both animate and inanimate, with soul or without soul — something which manifests itself only in contradictions, and which, therefore, could not be comprehended under any one idea." The danger in expanding this thought, and Goethe's realization that only "unattainable happiness" can be arrived at through a study of Nature, is the danger of making a case for the modernity of Goethe's artistic theories. But in world literature, Goethe was the contemporary of Shelley and Keats, Wordsworth and Coleridge. It was a time of experimentation, especially in the works of the latter two, but the Modern tradition, the Modern theory, was present only as something germinal in their thought. Poetry was still struggling against classical bounds, and it was here that Coleridge and Wordsworth performed their greatest service, that is, in effecting the final break with a restrictive classical system. They were the revolutionaries, and were subjected to the hardships of the revolutionary. Goethe was not a literary maverick, but yet, his thoughts on poetry, on Art, were not the thoughts of his time. "I am rather of the opinion, that the more incommensurable, and the more incomprehensible to the understanding a poetic production is, so much the better it is."

It must be remembered that poetry, at this time, was still "elegant language," and in its elaborate structure, its complex and often pedantic classical allusions, was, to use Auden's phrase, the scholar's "game of knowledge." If a poem is incomprehensible, within the bounds of an authentic ambiguity or vagueness, then it is the mind which must make the objects, the symbols of the poem, conform to itself. Nature and the artist have gone their separate ways, because in Modern thought, this theory was expanded to place in the author's mind the responsibility for creating impressions, for going one better than Nature, and then rounding and elaborating them into, if need be, a personal system. Nature became secondary, a mere sponsor of the artist. Intelligibility, the problems of intelligibility occurred, mainly, because the author was not dealing within the bounds of a universal (Nature), but within a particular (his own mind). This reversal of primacy, the interpolation of Nature and the artist, to the artist and Nature, gave to Modern literature its greatness, but to some extent a pernicious weakness, one which will be dealt with later, and which bodes ill for all of us.

The "genius" that Goethe spoke of,

artistic talent, was not something which could be learned, either by a study of the classical rules of Aristotle's *Poetics*, or by modelling classical works, or accepted successes. The artist succeeded by adhering to his own individual aesthetic.

The very fact that we speak of a talent, of a literary criticism, denotes something distinctly Modern. No Granville Hicks reviewed the *Divine Comedy*. The Church may have wished to "correct" a few passages, and Dante's enemies may have wished to physically obtain some redress, but they were, if not friendly, very much the reading public. The adoption of Dante's language for the Italian vernacular revealed an enlightened leadership, and an enlightened populace; for all Italians, north and south, appreciate the beauty of the Tuscan tongue. But this judgment was not based on any predetermined rules, and is akin to Goethe's statement: "If you read a book, and let it work upon you, and yield yourself up entirely to its influence, then, and only then, will you arrive at a correct judgment of it." If the Germans accepted Hegel "lock, stock, and barrel," it was because he appealed to those characteristics already latent in their personality, traits which made the "yielding up" much more easily accomplished. A great work is a focal point in a people's development, and Hegel's work gave voice to the heretofore inexpressible and inarticulated desires of the German people.

Springarn notes that "again and again the bad taste of a large public, which devours the bad and the good with equal pleasure, leads them (i.e. the German writers) into doubt." The public, by their successive judgments, can determine the course of a national, or when referring to Goethe's Germany, a regional literature. Thus, the need for professional criticism becomes apparent. An author must not be tied to the whims of even the most enlightened public, because he is always above them, and because literature would become reduced, figuratively, to a comic book world of *Superman, Archie,* and the *Justice League*. James Joyce was never a favorite of the public, and probably will never be a favorite of the public. The critics made James Joyce. A writer like William Saroyan will never be taught, will not live long in the coming centuries, because for the scholastic critics, for the university professors, he is nothing.

If the artist is the individual determiner of his work, the question must be asked, What determines the artist? and Where is modern literature or art going? This could seem to be a hollow question, like asking Picasso where is he going. Although the answers could be horrendously funny if put to certain people, I will attempt to answer them here, within a framework which Goethe has conveniently supplied.

Goethe inquired into one aspect of the future of German literature when he said, "What German author will not recognize himself in this picture . . . that he often sighed for an opportunity to subordinate the peculiarities of his original genius to a general national culture, which unfortunately did not exist?" Goethe rightly saw the relation between the condition of men and the artist. The unification of Germany concerns them. In a way, it determines them. They presuppose that their subordination to a general national culture would be beneficial for their art.

But Americans never thought this

way, and although there is such a thing as a distinctly American writer, they have, on the whole, stood apart from the national phantasmagoria. One can note, even in a careless investigation, an alienation between the American writer and the American nation. American writers have revolted, in a subtle way, from American society, and any serious reader can see this. This is especially true of our twentieth-century writers, and from Hemingway to Ferlinghetti, most have spent years abroad and have often compared various European life styles as superior to our own.

The artist does not need just freedom. If a nation is endowed with great sensitivity, there will be great art. If Goethe's authors want a German state, there will be a Bismarck, and then a Wagner to celebrate it for them.

Literature and philosophy reveal the concerns of men. This, ultimately, is what determines Art, for there is no theory, only a general practice which is formed into a theory by the students of literature. Very few artists are excited by theory. General practice determined Goethe's work, as general practice will determine our future art, and make all talk of theory meaningless.

— MICHAEL A. PELLEGRINI

•

Lament of the Bewitched

My beloved is the greatest of magicians.
One look from the tantalizing eyes charms my heart
so that it scarcely beats.
A touch of the hand binds me
with a spell of desire.
Who can deliver me from this enchantment?
My beloved is the greatest of magicians.

— MARLENE BURTON

Ode to Eve

My greatest joy in life was just to watch
Her, working in the midst of all her books;
And, gazing lovingly, to have to catch
My breath, which faltered, taken with her looks.
She sat upon her stool like Eve within
Her garden Paradise. And all around
Her were her books, the only creatures in
Her modern Eden. All was silence-bound.
'Till I, like Lucifer, went up and said
To her, in most seductive tones, "Hello."
She jumped! and pointed to the sign that read
"No talking in the library." And so:
Whisp'ring softly that I begged her pardon,
Left my Eve unscathed within her garden.

— WILLIAM SIMMER